

Appl. No. 10/089,901 – Translation of the Priority Documents
Amdt. dated May 17, 2004
Reply to Office Action of Apr. 26, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant has already provided the Office with verified replacement sheets. Now, Applicant submits a new set of verified replacement sheets.

Applicant submits also a new set of amendments according to Examiner's instructions but he is afraid that there is a misunderstanding.

As the Examiner knows the International Bureau of WIPO has provided the Office with a copy of the Priority Documents.

The text of the International Application is different from the text of the Priority Documents but no subject matter has been added. So, Applicant submitted the verified translation of the Priority Documents in order there was in the file of the application.

During the continuous examination before the various Patent Offices all over the world, two minor errors in translation were found. So, Applicant submitted replacement sheets verified by the same Translator. Of course they are not the basis for the procedure.

Anyway, if the PTO does not require verified translation of the Priority Documents, please do not take it into account.

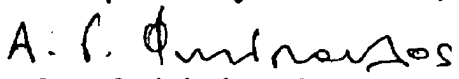
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I enclose also some minor amendments to the application (13 sheets). I have corrected the same errors in translation in the application as well and I have incorporated the remarks of the Examiners of the Patent Offices of various countries.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for her/his patience and constructive position.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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Anastasios G. Fotopoulos, Applicant

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Replacement Sheet

FLEXIBLE DRINKING STRAW

The invention relates to flexible drinking straws, which accompany the packaging of fruit juices, milks, coffees etc. and are bent to take up less space and to be handier.

5 The straws used to date for this purpose, bear 9-10 reentrant overlapping folds. To bend to obtuse angles (e.g. 180°), due to the restricted number of folds, continuous external pressure has to be exercised. This pressure keeps being exercised by the packaging material after they are
10 packed in their final form. As a result the folds are permanently deformed and straightening of the straw anew is not possible. Also a problem is posed by the fact that all folds are expanded (unfolded) after bending of the straw.

15 The invention retracts these drawbacks and gives the straw the possibility to be straightened anew, almost without any damage.

Figure 1 shows indicatively a flexible drinking straw with
20 twenty reentrant overlapping folds.

To obtain straightening of the straw requires, first, the flexible drinking straw to have sufficient folds (more than ten), so that when it bends the folds are not deformed in the
25 least. Second, the flexible drinking straw is not under any

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form of external pressure. Therefore the straw, after bending, is let free to remain bent at the desired angle without external pressure. Following this the straw can be packed in its final form. Third, to achieve the best possible
5 straightening and functionality of the straw, there have to be sufficient folds, so that after bending certain folds remain contracted. We aim at keeping the first folds (1) contracted (e.g. 2-4 first folds), so that after straightening, the straw may bend to all directions thanks to the contracted folds.
10 Further, straightening of the straw is considerably assisted by the existence of interspersed contracted folds among the expanded ones, as well as around the middle of the arch formed by bending of the straw, so that not many consecutive expanded folds exist without interference of one or more
15 contracted ones, particularly at the middle of the arch, where the biggest amount of pressure is exercised (e.g. an expanded fold is followed by a contracted fold).

In order definite folds remain contracted, apart from their
20 number, certain other factors are of importance as well, like the material, point at which pressure is exerted to bend the straw etc. (e.g. when the pressure is applied near or on the first folds, usually they stay contracted).

25 Finally, with the presence of contracted folds after bending the straw, we can increase its effective length,

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because when it straightens and all folds are expanded, it can bend, if we wish, at the first folds and the remaining section stays straight and larger than respective section of the usual straws.

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CLAIMS

1. The flexible drinking straws, which accompany packed fruit juices etc., **characterized in that** the number of reentrant overlapping folds is bigger than the maximum number of reentrant overlapping folds borne by the straws of
5 this type (10 reentrant overlapping folds).

2. The flexible drinking straws, which accompany packed fruit juices etc., according to claim 1 **characterized in that** the reentrant overlapping folds are sufficient, so that
10 when the straw bends the folds are not deformed in the least, while after bending, the straw is let free to remain bent at the desired angle without external pressure, whereas, following this, it can be packed in its final form.

15 3. The flexible drinking straws, which accompany packed fruit juices etc., according to claims 1, 2 **characterized in that**, the reentrant overlapping folds are sufficient, so that after bending certain folds remain contracted, like the first folds (1), also other folds remain
20 contracted interspersed among the expanded ones, as well as around the middle of the arch formed by bending of the straw.

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ABSTRACT

FLEXIBLE DRINKING STRAW

The invention relates to flexible drinking straws that accompany packed fruit juices, milks, coffees etc. and are bent to take up less space and to be handier, and concerns the changes that render straightening of the straw possible, which was impossible until now, and at the same time they offer the possibility of increasing the effective length of the straw.

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